



## Building Policy Capacity in the Voluntary Sector

### Public Engagement

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The voluntary sector plays a critical role in delivering public services to the most vulnerable citizens. Horizontal or collaborative policy-making requires voluntary sector organizations to do more than simply deliver services: it requires them to be part of the policy-making process, including decision-making. However, research shows that many voluntary sector organizations do not currently have the capacity to participate in these processes in an effective way. Levasseur and Rounce work with the United Way of Winnipeg and other community organizations to co-create and deliver training to boost knowledge about how government works (including political government and the public service), how public policy is made, and how best to communicate with government about public policy needs, key priorities, and outcomes.

Four key research questions drive this project: 1) What do participants value most about the training on how to better work with government(s)? (or, what do they find most useful?) 2) How do participants use the learning that they do in the sessions? 3) What barriers are there to the integration of this learning into organizational practices? 4) Do participants believe that this training makes a difference in terms of their organizations' relationships with government?

To answer these questions, we draw on data from training participants that assesses their experiences, knowledge, and application of the learning. We incorporate data from individual workshop session evaluations, evaluations done by the United Way of Winnipeg and other key organizations, and interviews with key stakeholders to draw conclusions about the value of this approach to co-creating training and policy capacity in the voluntary sector.